



# Park Law Enforcement Association

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Mayor Eric Garcetti  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mayor Garcetti:

My name is Bill Westerfield. I am the President of the Park Law Enforcement Association and the past North American representative to the International Ranger Federation. I am the retired Chief Ranger for Wyoming State Parks. I was an active peace officer in Wyoming with the Laramie County Sheriff's Department (4 years), the Wyoming Highway Patrol (15 years), and Wyoming State Parks (19 years) with over 38 years of combined law enforcement service. I am aware of the issue regarding arming the Los Angeles City Park Rangers. If I may, I would like to share my thoughts for your consideration.

Recreational law enforcement is one of the most dangerous forms of law enforcement. Rangers most often work by themselves, with very little external support from other agencies. Rangers frequently encounter park visitors who are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol and they are responsible for enforcing all applicable state and local laws to protect park visitors, park facilities and natural and cultural resources. Park boundaries do not exclude criminal activity. The situations they encounter require immediate response. They cannot wait for backup.

Captain Dale Steele/Treasurer  
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One of the major concerns that city administrators face is the addition liability of arming law enforcement personnel. Law enforcement liability is most adequately dealt with through the following considerations: did the agency follow appropriate hiring procedures; did the agency appropriately train their Rangers and did the agency appropriately supervise their Rangers. If these three areas are properly managed, then there is very limited liability to the agency.

Reviewing your city web page, it appears you are adequately vetting your applicants and sending them to a full LAPD basic police academy for training, which provides them with the training to appropriately carry firearms in the performance of their duties. If you adequately supervise your Rangers, you will not incur additional liability.

Provided that law enforcement training has been provided, arming Park Rangers adds no additional liability to the agency yet provides tremendous additional protection to your visitors and to the Rangers. By not providing Park Rangers all necessary tools a professional law enforcement officer needs to perform their duties, I submit that your liability is increased. Properly trained and equipped Rangers do more to protect your visitors, employees, and facilities than relying on support from other agencies that may or may not be able to provide immediate support in critical incidents.

Please favorably consider arming your properly trained, dedicated law enforcement Park Rangers.

Thank you.

Bill Westerfield

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